

*Todd Mayhew*

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Dear Parents,

*Over the last three months, the fifth grade students at Lakeside Elementary have been taking part in weekly creative writing sessions called Story Workshop®. The Story Workshop approach, created and developed by Chicago author John Schultz, uses a variety of word games, oral reading exercises, and writing activities to develop all of the cognitive processes associated with writing. Students who have taken Story Workshop classes have shown tremendous improvements on ISTEP and ISAT tests, as well as in their overall reading and writing abilities.*

*All of the students have worked very hard over the term, exploring various storytelling methods including the “dream story,” the “monster story,” and the how-to. Through these writing forms, they experimented with complex principles such as sense of address, mental imagery, and narrative movement. Over the weeks, we have been observing their class participation and reading their written work. Each student has shown advancements in the abilities to read aloud, recall story imagery and elements, and to communicate both orally and through writing.*

*To celebrate these achievements, we have compiled each student’s best work into a short story collection. On Friday, May 28th, we will be meeting with the fifth graders for a final time to give each student a copy of the book, and allow them the opportunity to present their work to family and friends. Stop by the school auditorium from 9:00 am to 11:00 am to get in on the fun and listen to the result of a semester’s worth of hard work.*

*Hope to see you there!*

*Yours Truly,*

Todd Mayhew  
Story Workshop Director